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Dedicated to the farm workers', sharecroppers', tenants' and small owners' struggle for union, justice and a better life.

SOUTHERN FARM LEADER

OFFICIAL ORGAN SHARE CROPPERS UNION

Vol. I.—No. 3. New Orleans, La., July, 1936 Price 2 Cents Copy

Lady Whipped By Arkansas Land Owners

BULLETIN

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — The strike of cotton choppers in Eastern Arkansas was called off this week with officials of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union claiming a victory after six weeks of the walk-out.

When the strike call was issued the wage for day labor was 75 cents a day. The strike pushed wages up to a dollar and a $1.25.

By REX PITKIN

A Southern white woman and minister were flogged in the Arkansas cotton country recently because they tried to arrange funeral services for a Negro member of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union who is reported to have been beaten to death as a result of his union activities during the cotton choppers strike.

They were taken out into the woods and lashed with a belly-band by six planters. Their brutal beating shows how desperate the landlords are to destroy all the workers' and farmers' organizations in the South.

The white woman, Miss Willie Sue Blagden, is a native of Memphis and has long been a friend of the working man. The minister is Rev. Claude Williams, of Little Rock, one of the most active fighters for labor in Arkansas. Rev. Williams has cooperated with the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union ever since it was formed two years ago. He is a teacher and national vice-president of the American Federation of Teachers. He is also Southern representative of the Religion and Labor Foundation.

Rev. Williams and Miss Blagden drove into Earle, Arkansas, to find Mrs. Weems and arrange for the funeral of her husband. They were parked on the side of the road when six planters drove up. Two of the landlords climbed into the car and forced the minister to drive out of town. The other four followed in their own car.

When Rev. Williams proved that

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FLOGGED BY ARKANSAS LANDLORDS

REV. CLAUDE WILLIAMS

WILLIE SUE BLAGDEN

Sales Tax Hurts Poor Farmers In Louisiana

BATON ROUGE, La.—The Louisiana state legislature put a larger part of the burden of its tax program on the poor man's shoulders when it enacted into law a so-called "luxury" tax, similar to those in other states known as sales taxes. The administration-proposed legislation imposes a two per cent levy on "luxuries" costing more than $3, such as clothing, canned foods, medicine and the like. The proceeds will go to the state fund for social security legislation, thus compelling the poor man to pay for relief for the poor.

Opposition to the proposed tax came from all parts of the state. Labor, educational, civic and social groups protested in meetings. Committees from these organizations were appointed to call on the administrators condemning it. At a conference of organizers opposed to the tax, the labor representative insisted that the American Federation of Labor opposed the sales tax in any form. A telegram was sent to Governor Leche urging that commodities which affect the needy be left out. It was pointed out that it was a tax on the necessities of life, that food, clothing, medicine, soap were not luxuries, but that it would make cleanliness, medical care and health a luxury for the poor and that "a sales tax is the kind of tax that permits the rich to escape their duty and makes the poor pay to help the poor."

By the combined efforts of the various organizations, several articles proposed in the tax were eliminated.

Rubber Organizer Beaten In Gadsen

GADSEN, Ala.—Rubber organizers in Alabama, like cotton organizers in this state, have to face terror inspired by the bosses and landlords.

S. H. Dalrymple, president of the United Rubber Workers who are now on strike, was whipped so badly by a mob that he is now in a hospital.

The Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company is trying to get rid of the union by driving out all the leaders. J. E. Fareman, organizer, was the first to be ordered from Gadsen by a bunch of thugs who visited him at his hotel.

The bosses are afraid that all the shops here will be organized if the Goodyear strike is won. Wages in Gadsen are 40 per cent lower than wages of rubber workers in Ohio.

Drouth Costs Farmers a Billion In Crop Losses as Heat Wave Continues

Share Croppers Union Will Hold Its First Convention

A bright new page in the history of the Share Croppers Union will be written soon when delegates gather for the Union's first convention.

The Union, organized five years ago and forced underground by the vicious terror of the planters, has secretly led the struggles of Alabama's share croppers for a better life.

After Ralph Gray was lynched in August, 1931, thirty Negro sharecroppers in Tallapoosa County met and organized the first local of the Union. Now after five years of fighting for the rights of Alabama's cotton workers the Share Croppers Union has 12,000 members.

The history of the union has been marked by the many struggles that have been fought in the interest of the wage hands, sharecroppers, tenants and small land owners. The most outstanding fights have been the Camp Hill struggle in 1931, the Reeltown struggle in 1932, the first cotton pickers' strike in the history of the South in 1934, the cotton choppers' and pickers' strike in 1935 and many other struggles against evictions, against the terror which has cost the lives of so many Union members.

Now for the first time the Union members are going to elect delegates to represent them at their convention. The delegates will have to settle many important problems which directly concern the best interests of every man, woman and child who works in the cotton fields. The results of this convention will be the guide, the program for the entire Union to follow in the struggles which will soon come.

Ways of winning better working conditions and higher wages for day laborers through cotton pickers' strikes will be one of the most important subjects before the convention.

Preparations wil be made to fight for drouth relief. The delegates will consider the exact drouth demands and how they will go about winning them. The convention will consider whether to organize a march on Washington to lay the Union's demands before the government.

The important problem of debts, mortgage foreclosures and evictions will be worked out so that the union will be able to prevent mass evictions from the land because of the drouth destroyed crops.

Important items on the program include the adoption of a constitution to guide the Union in its day to day struggles, the election of all union officials, the problem of a training school for the union organizers so that they will be better able to carry ou their work in their field, and the future of the Union's paper, the Southern Farm Leader. This last

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End of Drouth Not In Sight Says U. S. Weather Bureau

By C. L. JOHNSON

The blistering heat wave sweeping the country has brought ruin to almost a billion dollars worth of crops, far more than was expected because of the drouth, as well as taking the lives of more than 500 people. Temperatures above 100 degrees have been common in the drouth areas for the past wek in one of the severest heat waves on record. Crops that might have brought a small income have burned up. Grasshoppers and insects that thrive in hot weather have infested fields in the Middle-West. Light rains in some sections failed to do any good. The United States Weather Bureau warned that the end of the heat wave is not in sight yet.

Crop losses in South Dakota were estimated at $140,000,000 by C. A. Russel, State Secretary of Agriculture. In Georgia a first estimate of crop loss was $40,000,000. In the western part of the Carolinas the Director of the Extension Service said there would be about a 10% stand of cotton, while the rest of the Carolinas would be lucky to get a 25% stand.

A map of the drouth area issued by the Department of Agriculture showed that extreme drouth conditions exist in the western Carolinas, eastern Tennessee, north Georgia and north-west Alabama. A large territory surrounding this area is classed as suffering from severe drouth and the rest of the South is suffering from less severe drouth.

FOOD SHORTAGE LIKELY

With the spring wheat crop burned up and the corn crop seriously damaged it is unlikely that any of these crops will be exported. The Wall Street speculators have been shooting prices up and down while they watch the crop and weather bulletins from the drouth areas. While thousands of drouth stricken farmers are starving the speculators plan to reap huge profits through high scarcity prices. The prices of pigs and cattle dropped sharply when

(Continued On Page Two)

Strikers In Alabama Fight Against T.C.I.

BESSEMER, Ala. — Because the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company fired 500 workers, the miners of Red Mountain, Alabama, went on strike a month ago.

The strike was called in protest against the new company plan which calls not only for the firing of 500 miners but for changing the wage scale from an hourly rate to a tonnage rate.

The tonnage rate means that the workers, instead of getting a flat sum for their day's labor, have to produce a certain number of tons of ore each day if they are to receive the same pay.

This leads to a speed-up, and the workers would have to work twice as fast if they were to earn the same pay. The speed-up increases the number of accidents in the mines. Digging for ore is much more dangerous than any other kind of mining, and ore miners suffer a high rate of injuries and even death as a result of their work.

Company deputies and thugs have carried on a campaign of terror against the strikers — just as the landlords do when cotton pickers strike. Strikers have been shot at from ambush along the roads to Muscoda and Ishkooda miner.

Richard Hold, another striker, was beaten so badly that he was taken to the hospital.

Calif. Farm Workers Plan to Join A. F. of L.

STOCKTON, Calif. — The farm workers in California have organized one big union as the means of winning higher wages and better working conditions from the large growers who monopolize the best farm lands in this state.

At a conference last month they decided to form the Federation of Agriculture, Cannery and Packing Workers of California and will soon apply to the American Federation of Labor for a charter. By this means they will unite with workers in all industries in every state in the union.

The new agricultural federation operates through a council which represents the many unions in the federation. Soon a convention of all the farm workers will be called to discuss the problems which they face. Their problems differ from the problems of the packing house and cannery workers.

The union will seek a three dollar daily wage with monthly wages set at no less than $85.

FRUIT STRIKE WON

HARBOR CITY, Calif.—The Federated Argicultural Unions of America have forced eighty-eight growers in this district to recognize the union and sign contracts. The union is composed of American, Japanese and Filipino fruit workers.

Starvation Relief Level In Alabama

MONTGOMERY, Alabama. — The starvation level of relief in Alabama has been pushed even lower.

5,000 families have been dropped from the local relief rolls.

And relief for families fortunate to remain on the WPA rolls has been dropped from $4.89 to $1.58 a month.

In Jefferson county 2,200 needy persons were dropped from the relief lists.

In Tarrant City recently an unemployed worker, who was refused aid, dropped dead of starvation. The worker left a family of three. The family is now living on $1.59 a month.

WASHINGTON NEWS

By JANE WILKINSON

With his usual unconcern for the poor farmer's problems, Secretary Wallace plans four more years for a farm program which has already had practically three years of failure. The features of his plans embrace an endorsement of the AAA soil conservation program with subsidy payments to farmers, the principle of crop production control within constitutional limits, the present reciprocal trade agreement policy and some plan for commodity loans to farmers. This is more proof that no poor farmer can rely on any real help to come from a secretary of agriculture who has consistently shown that he is on the side of the big plantation-owner.

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Finally demands that the huge benefits being paid to big plantation-owners were given a small pretense of being answered by Roosevelt and Wallace. They endorsed a bill which was passed on June 6th to curtail big payments under the Soil Conservation Act program. Payments of $2,000 to $10,000 will be cut 25 per cent and those over $10,000 will be cut in half. Wallace held out on the issue for a long time on the excuse that in reducing the benefit payments to only big farmers, his program would be made ineffective.

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America will no longer be the welcome home of thousands of oppressed people of foreign nations who have come here in the past, hoping to find escape and a road to a better life. They found recently that the government is going to refuse them relief because they failed, for one reason or another to take out citizenship papers. 120,000 will be discharged from their jobs after June 30 when the administration starts spending the new $1,425,000,000 relief fund. They will be deported to their unwelcoming former homes, to adjust themselves where they left off, and all of them will realize America is a different America from the one which once gave homes to millions of our foreign forefathers who came here with the same hopes that they did. They will also be confused when they find out that part of the new relief fund will be used to hunt them out and send them away.

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Our representatives in Congress failed us again on an issue which hangs over us all like a heavy cloud, when hope for anti-lynch legislation in this session was killed. Congress adjourned and no definite action was taken. There was a possibility of a House vote on the measure but because the anti-lynch bill had to remain on the calendar for seven legislative days it was killed as adjournment took place before that time. It is clear that the bill was hurriedly jammed in at the last minute in order to save several legislators from embarrassment, and also because there was no possibility of its passage at such a time.

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On June 2nd, large numbers of farm women paid a visit to the Capitol, supposedly in the interest of their sisters of agricultural life, but evidently only in the interest of their class which was clearly a land-owning class. They were greeted graciously by President and Mrs. Roosevelt, Secretaries Wallace and Hull, and filled with glowing statements by all four about the work that could be done by them to raise the standards of rural life because of their position. The farm women attended a conference of the Associated Country Women of the World in which they discussed their own problems which were far removed from the interests of their poorer brothers and sisters of the land.

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The soil conservation service of the department of agriculture announces that 36,000 miles of farm land will be terraced to stop erosion during the next three years under agreements with farmers. This means that any erosion control to be done by the government will be done only at the cost of the farmer himself. So the farmer with a low income will not be able to afford it.

Drouth Costs Farmers Crop Loss of Billion

(Continued From Page One)

Secretary Wallace announced that the government would probably buy 20 to 30 million dollars of drouth area stock. The speculators are preparing to cash in as they did in 1934 under the AAA when they got millions of dollars in profits out of Wallace's government pig-buying program.

WALLACE WAKES UP

After sleeping peacefully while the Weather Bureau issued drouth warnings, Wallace and the other Washington officials woke up too late to get an appropriation from Congress for drouth relief before it adjourned. Now Wallace is recommending that 500 million dollars of W.P.A., Resettlement and Customs funds be set aside for drouth relief. Another half billion dollars increase in the national budget would have been embarrasing to Roosevelt during election year.

President Roosevelt has announced that 75,000 farmers will be given W.P.A. jobs, 55,000 in the North-West and 20,000 in the South. This is but a small portion of the farmers who will need this relief work.

More than $1,500,000 of Resettlement Administration funds will be distributed as grants of $15 a month for 3 months, according to the statement of R. W. Hudgens, Regional Director. 35,000 families are supposed to be aided. $15 a month for the next 3 months will in no way solve the relief problem this winter. It will only last until the election is over.

There are approximately 650,000 farm families in the drouth areas of the South labeled "extreme" and "severe" by the Department of Agriculture. This does not include the thousands of farm families in other sections of the South that are faced with loss of crops due to the drouth. Mr. Tugwell of the Resettlement Administration made a nice statement when he said "No destitute drouth-stricken farmer in the nation is going to starve", but when the government plans to give relief to only 55,000 farm families in the South, when there are nearly a million families in need of immediate relief, the nice statement sounds a little hollow.

DEMAND REAL DROUTH RELIEF

In the last issue of Southern Farm Leader, four demands for drouth relief were raised: (1) Work relief or cash relief for all drouth-stricken families to provide food, shelter and clothes until next year, (2) Full government protection against mortgage foreclosures, and seizure of livestock and farm equipment for debts, (3) Cancellation of all farmers' debts to the government (Resettlement and Farm Credit Administration loans), and (4) Preparation by the government to make crop loans to sharecroppers, tenants and small farm owners for the coming crop season.

If these demands are not met, if the government does not enlarge its relief program, then the farmers themselves must go to Washington and convince the officials that we MUST HAVE REAL DROUTH RELIEF. The three unions in the South, the Farmers' Union, the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union and the Share Croppers Union should start preparing now for this action.

HOW TO ORGANIZE

By C. L. JOHNSON

We are starting this column in the paper so we can answer questions about organization and any other problems that come up in regard to the work of the Union. We want Union members to write in their questions to be answered. We hope that from now on all Union members will use this column as a means of education on Union work.

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Share Croppers Union dues and joining fees are as follows: 10c to join of which 5c goes to the organizer and 5c to the National Office for the membership book; 5c a month dues of which 2c remains in the treasury of the Local and 3c is sent to the National Office. The Secretary of the Local is responsible for collecting the dues and sending to the National Office for dues stamps and membership books. (National Office address is P. O. Box 859, New Orleans, La.)

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This is the third issue of Southern Farm Leader, official organ of the Share Croppers Union. It is the first time in our Union that we have had a means of getting news of every kind to our whole membership. It will serve as a means of uniting our membership, educating our members and leading the struggles of the Union.

I have a proposal to make. We have to have all members get the paper and it has to be paid for. Why not charge 25c to join the join the Union and then the member will get a years subscription to the paper. We could leave it up to the people who join, 25c for those who want the paper and 10c for those who do not. We should try to have at least one member of each family that joins the Union subscribe to the paper.

The delegates coming to the convention should talk this over with the members and we can decide at the convention.

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In the fight for rural schools the Farmers' Union in Wes' Bellvue, Louisiana, is showing the way. They recently got out a petition asking the school board for a school bus for the Negro school and had all the people in the community sign it before they presented it. This is one thing all the Union Locals should be doing. If you want advice on when and how to ask for better school conditions, write to us and we'll help you.

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We have a very fine white Union member in Tallapoosa County, Alabama, who really knows how to get results in the Union. When I visited him a short time ago he had many problems in the community that he wanted advice and action on. We talked them over and decided on the best steps to take and now he is going about doing it. He has recruited 19 white and Negro members into the Union in the last month as a result of his activity. When the farmers see the Union getting results they are glad to join in and help out with the work. This brother and I visited another white farmer that day and talked over the Union and the problems confronting this farmer, and our good brother recruited his 20th member for the month.

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There is a good Negro brother in Pointe Coupee Parish, Louisiana, who recently organized another Farmers' Union Local of 49 members. He has been doing very fine work in the fight for schools and now has presented us with almost a hundred names of sharecroppers and tenants who did not get their benefit payments under the AAA. I mention these brothers because of the fine work they are doing, although we are not forgetting the many other good organizers working hard in the field right now too.

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In the next issue I will take up some of the problems in our Locals. If you want any particular question answered, send it in. Make this column answer your problems, and it will help many others who are being worried by the same problems.

Share Croppers Represented In American Youth Congress

CLEVELAND, Ohio. — Young people—workers, farmers, students from every section of the United States gathered here early this month to discuss their common problems and adopt a common program against their oppressors.

Meeting in the third annual American Youth Congress the delegates unanimously agreed to join hands in the fight against war, and pledged themselves to struggle together for decent relief, for jobs and for the right to go to school.

They decided that unless their demands are met they would gather a million signatures and would try to rally 10,000 young people for a march to Washington on the day the president is inaugurated, March 4, 1937. In the Nation's capital they plan to raise their voices and tell the president that they will not be the forgotten generation.

The cotton sharecroppers of the South were represented by Edwin Mitchell, nineteen-year old chairman of the youth section of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. Mitchell, national vice-president of the youth congress, played a leading role in the proceedings, and is active in the campaign to pass the American Youth Act, the bill presented in Congress upon behalf of millions of young people who have no jobs and are deprived of the right to go to school.

The American Youth Act provides that the government set up work projects at *trade union wages* for unemployed youth, and provides that the relief agencies support high school students and set up educational projects for college students. Hundreds of trade unions, churches and other organizations representing millions of young people, have endorsed the bill.

The Youth Congress, before its delegates departed to every state in the union, took the following pledge:

"We the young people of America, reaffirm our right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. With confidence we look forward to a better life, a larger liberty and freedom. To these ends we dedicate our lives, our abilities and our united strength."

Black Legion Like Old Ku Klux Klan

DETROIT, Michigan.—Just as the Ku Klux Klan used to terrorize Alabama, so now the Black Legion plays the same role in this great automobile manufacturing city.

The bosses use the Black Legion to help break up unions and murder union organizers. The brutal killings of George Marchuk and John L. Bielak, auto workers organizers, have already been traced to the Black Legion, and the investigation has only begun.

White Girl Flogged By Arkansas Planters

(Continued From Page One)

he was a minister they laughed and said he was a "fake." When they reached a stretch of woods they ordered him to stop and get out of his car.

They asked him about the strike and wanted to know the names of the sharecroppers who were leading the walk-out. When he refused to give them any information they lashed him fourteen times with a bellyband. But Rev. Williams still refused to talk.

They tried to force Miss Blagden to tell them about the union. She remained silent. The planters used insulting language and lashed her four times across the back and legs. They put her on a train for Memphis and warned her never to return to Earle.

Then they put Rev. Williams into his car and chased him for more than twenty miles. He was forced to drive at seventy miles an hour to get away from the planters who wanted to kill him.

"We are going to break up the union," they said to the minister. "We don't care what means we have to use but we are going to break it up." The answer of the cotton sharecroppers to this threat was a continuation of the strike.

The strike was called late in May against the 75 cent daily wage. The union demanded a dollar and a half for eight hours work in the fields. Day laborers were working twelve to fifteen hours for the 75 cent wage. Soon after the strike was called wages were raised to a dollar and in one county, settlement on that basis was made.

Planters and deputy sheriffs themselves frankly told reporters how they tried to break the strike. Union members were arrested and given heavy fines and then forced to work out their fines on the plantations at the rate of seventy-five cents a day. "Such action was necessary," one sheriff said, "To break it up quick and avoid trouble. What I did was to charge 'em with trespassing. They were trying to get other Negroes out on strike. Well, they are serving at the farm now."

Rev. Williams granted an interview to the SOUTHERN FARM LEADER the day after he was beaten. "The flogging they gave me proves that workers, sharecroppers and small farmers cannot depend on the generosity of the planters," he said. "The planters will keep on pushing down wages and sharecrop agreements. The only thing that farm workers can do is to organize into unions and force the landlords to meet their demands.

OUR READERS WRITE

Too Poor To Go To Church

Washington, La.

Brother Editor:-

I heard something that did not satisfy me at all. The Catholic Priest at Washington said to a Methodist preacher he had to put the Negroes out of his church for they had not helped the church. The priest said he sorrow to say that and sorrow to do that, putting the Negro out of the church.

My friends say that the real reason the Negroes can't help in the church is they have no chance and the Negro is too poor. Around Washington, La., the Negroes don't get but 50c a day so how can the Negro give for the church, when they don't get enough to eat and clothe themselves. They haven't got but one pair of overalls for everyday and Sunday. Do you think this is right to put in Southern Farm Leader? If not fix it up to put in the papers.

The farmer is in the same shape as the day worker on the big plantation. They make crops but get no settlement. The big landlord sells the crop when he gets ready. Some farmers don't come out with nothing.

I made another white member on June 6th and he is very interested. He finished 12 grades in school and is willing to help build the Farmers' Union. His father tells him to help build the Union too.

Some of the farmers come out with just a few dollars but not enough to do any good for they have been robbed in the commissary store—without a pistol. Some get 50c a day, some get 60c and a few get 75c a day, it depends for whom they are working. The women is working for 50c a week so how can they give at church. Some get $1.00 a week and some get $1.50 a week so none of them get enough. So how can the Negro pay their church dues. Just a few can do it, the rest are unable. They desire to do but they just can't because the devil done robbed them all. And the devil goes to church on Sunday to put on an outside show to make the poor believe he is Christian. They go to church to fool the poor so they can steal from them better.

A Negro Sharecroper

20 Years In Chains Threatens Herndon

The threat of twenty years on a Georgia chain gang still hangs over the head of Angelo Herndon, young organizer of the Atlanta unemployed, who was convicted of "insurrection" because he dared lead a demonstration of relief workers to the Atlanta city hall.

Herndon was convicted and served almost two years of his sentence before the Superior Court reversed the decision of a lower court, and said that Herndon was innocent.

Now comes the news that the Georgia Supreme Court has overruled the finding of the Superior Court and that the young organizer must serve out his term.

The Committee to Aid the Herndon Defense, led by the International Labor Defense, is rallying to take the case to the United States Supreme Court and permanently free Herndon.

"The decision of the Georgia Supreme Court ordering me to serve 18 to 20 years on the chain-gang is a sentence equivalent to death by torture," says Herndon as he appeals to workers and farmers to compel the Georgia legislature to repeal the "insurrection" law.

CHAIN GANG TERROR

COLUMBUS, Ga.—J. Leslie Posey, a country truck driver reports that he saw a chain gang prisoner badly beaten by a warden.

Union Pressure Wins

Jackson's Gap, Ala.

Brother Editor:-

When the Union had some cases investigated where landlords kept the sharecropper's part of it we get some good results. Here is a copy of a letter one cropper got.

Dear Mr.—

Pursuant to the agreement and understanding reached between yourself and Mr. Joe Taylor this afternoon, I am herewith enclosing check of W. B. Taylor and Son by Joe Taylor, payable to yourself in the sum of $11.30.

This as you will understand is the total amount of the balance due you for the two parity payments of 1934-1935 less the item of interest to which you agreed.

Trusting that this leaves the matter entirely to your satisfaction, I am

Very truly yours,
(Signed) D. C. FRANCE

The other day Joe Taylor sent this cropper a card telling him to come to see him. When he got there Joe Taylor paid him all the 12c government loan money he was due.

Harry Spragins has his own farm but last fall when the checks came his were turned over to Dodle Willis who owns the Cash Store in Dadeville by Farrington, the county agent. Spragins asked Farrington for the checks and he said he didn't have any for him. Then he asked Willis about them and Willis said he got them. Spragins owed Willis $30 plus interest on a crop loan so Willis gave him $5 and some cents and called himself deducting the debt from the rest. Spragins never endorsed the checks, Willis must have done it.

Dewey Sharpe at Dadeville works on halves with Lewis Young. Sharp never got his 1934 parity check and Young gave him $4.73 for 1935 but he never saw the check. All he got was the cash Young gave him.

A White Sharecropper

Worse In Chambers County

Lafayette, Ala.

Brother Editor:-

The sharecroppers in Chambers County are facing worse conditions than they ever did. The landlords are working them for starving wages. Tom Sanders, a big landlord, works day laborers for 50c a day. He hires women to chop cotton and he tells them he don't need them in the morning. He works them in the evening from 1 o'clock till sun down for 25c. He does this in order to keep from feeding them at dinner. They have to work four evenings to get a dollar and they have to feed themselves out of this.

Sanders is one of the big plantation owners and he owns a saw mill and a gin too. He works Negroes and whites for the same wages. The white workers tell the Negroes they would quit but some one would take their job. So the Negro workers told them if they would strike they would see to it no one else took their job from them in order to make Sanders raise wages.

J. A. Carder works many wage hands for $10 a month and their wives for 40c per day. So the workers are going to carry on a struggle against the robbing system of the landlords.

—A Sharecropper

Union Can't Meet In Church

Lettsworth, La.

Brother Editor:-

The union here now has begun to have some trouble. Some of the members consulted Pellie Milton, an official of the St. Mary's Baptist church about having meetings there. He failed to let us meet there. He went and asked Kennie Mounger about it. Mounger told him he had better not let anything like that go on in the church. Mounger is a landlord and a merchant and he is against the union.

Mounger has been trying to find out who the leader of the union is and he said if he found him out he was going to get up a mob to run him out o the country. But when he goes to do that the union will see him.

Louis Sturgins, a Negro servant of George Kellar's, who only works for meals, said that he wished every union member would starve. Clabon Collins, a Negro servant of E. B. Gennins, seeks to find out all the secrets of the union. He also seeks to find who all is a union member and carries the news back to Gennins.

How be ever, the more trouble we have the stronger we unite. We have took a stand for justice and equality. We have a constitutional right which our forefathers shed their blood for in the revolutionary war. And if it costs our lives to win this right, we mean to stand one for all and all for one, and humanity is bound to win.

Secretary,
Lettsworth Local Farmers' Union

Union Holds Picnic

West Bellview, La.

Brother Editor:

The local Farmers Union No. 2 had a picnic on June 19 with a numerous crowd of the members.

The ladies showed their appreciation by all the good things that they brought to eat. And the men completed it by their assistance. Everything was up to the minute.

We had lunch at 2:00 P. M. Then our attention was turned to the speaker for the evening, Mr. J. S. Moore of Simmesport, La., who made a wonderful address which enlightend the minds and hearts of the farmers

At 4:00 P. M., refreshments were served and everybody enjoyed the day and returned home with happy hearts.

—Irma Mae Aaron

D. Davis Charges Too Much

Jacoby, La.

Brother Editor:-

We had a called meeting in June in our section. D. Davis is selling merchandise at a high cost. Flour is $1.50 for a 24 pound bag, and he charges 20% interest. Angelo Sparacins, another storekeeper, charges 8% interest and so does A. A. Dissille, another merchant.

We have a terrible drouth on hand now. If we have no further preparation made for relief I feel like that the relief ought to reach all of us poor farmers because it will be much needed. Please tell us what is the next step to take, for the landlords will cut off furnishing in the next 20 or 30 days.

I will close this short letter by,

—A Sharecropper

Share Croppers Will Hold Convention

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subject is an important one because the paper is one of the best weapon's the union has of bringing its message to more and more share croppers.

In addition the convention will consider the best ways of winning the right to vote for its members, and the convention delegates will discuss the fight for more and better schools so that their children will be provided at least with an elementary education. Alabama's schools are the poorest in the United States and the union has to carry on a constant campaign to improve education in the areas where it is organized.

United action will be planned to stop the denial of our constitutional rights—the right to free speech and assembly, and the right to openly organize.

All locals should immediately make plans to send delegates to the convention. The time and place cannot be announced in order to prevent the delegates from suffering at the hands of their landlords because they dared come to the Union convention.

The importance of the convention can best be realized through the words of the Union Secretary, C. L. Johnson who says: "The future of our Union, our work and our program will have a great deal to do with the future of the South. Will slavery, hunger and misery be abolished or will we be crushed under the terror of the landlord, capitalists and bankers into worse slavery and starvation than we live under today?

"Our voice will be a mighty one in deciding this. Let's make our convention express the desire, will and determination of the masses of oppressed white and Negro farm people of the South in the struggle for UNION, JUSTICE, AND PLENTY!"

Illegal Methods of Selling Short By Wall Street Bankers Rob Farmers of Millions Says Irby, Urging Congressional Action

By W. C. IRBY
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For the past two years the speculators on Boards of Trade and Stock Exchanges have sold by the illegal practice of "short selling" nearly 400,000,000 bales of cotton and billions of bushels of grain and other commodities "they did not have and never expected to have."

This practice has damaged all the farmers hundreds of millions of dollars in prices of their cotton, grain and other commodities.

The United States courts have repeatedly held that the practice of "short selling" on boards of trade and stock exchanges is illegal.

The Federal Income Tax laws require the payment of 100 per cent income tax on all profits made in violation of the law.

Congress, therefore, should immediately require the Secretary of Agriculture to report to Congress the names of individuals and transactions in "short selling" and instruct the internal revenue department to proceed to collect the profits from these illegal transactions on the Boards of Trade and the Stock Exchanges.

PROCESSORS' PROFITS

Then Congress should provide for the payment of damages by distribution among real farmers, tenants, share croppers and wage workers on farms, of the moneys obtained by this means, in proportion to the amount of cotton, grain and other farm commodities produced by them.

FIGHT UNEMPLOYMENT WITH EXCESS

After farmers have paid damages by reason of losses in prices of their cotton, grain and other commodities. Congress should provide for use of surplus funds to give employment and relief to all who need it.

The facts as to the processors' extortionate excess profits should cause serious consideration of all citizens who are interested in the future welfare of our nation.

I believe investigation would show the same amazing profits made by cotton and flour mills as well as the packers and all other large manufacturing corporations, yet the income of American farmers only increased 10 per cent.

These extortionate profits are pauperizing millions of people and Congress should provide a law to take them through taxation for relief of the people. They should be used to build cotton mills, flour mills and other industrial plants sufficient to manufacture all of the raw material into finished products in America. This would provide useful permanent employment for millions of needy people.

CONSUMERS PAY

We can only manufacture half the cotton grown in America and must ship the other half to Europe to be manufactured and shipped back. This enables manufacturers to charge us in price of cotton goods, shirts, overalls, dresses, etc., the cost of shipping the cotton to Europe, the freight of bringing the goods back to America, and tariff ranging from $100 to possibly $1,000 per bale according to value of cotton goods although the cotton was grown and manufactured in America and never left America.

When I was a child I used to go with my father to visit a friend whose house was built of lumber cut in England. His grandather cut the logs on his plantation, floated them more than 100 miles down the river to Charleston, shipped them to England, where they were cut into lumber and shipped back to his land in Laureus couty, South Carolina, to build his home.

We would not think of doing that now. Yet the practice of shipping half our cotton to Europe to be made into shirts, overalls and dresses, is just as wasteful and foolish. For it is not only expensive, but it gives the international bankers power over the price of our cotton and other commodities and enables them to dominate the living condition of our people.

The people or nation that controls the price and market of the raw material of a nation will dominate and control the living conditions of its people.

We have spent billions of dollars in saving our people from starvation, but have nothing to show for millions of dollars of it, except more millions of hungry, poverty-stricken people and these enormous extortionate profits of the large trusts and monopolies. Use there profits to build cotton mills, flour mills and other plants necessary to manufacture all of our raw material into finished products and it will provide permanent, useful employment to the young, strong and vigorous, and comfort and retirement to the aged and feebler members of society. Our young men are conscripted to face bullets and save our nation from foreign invasion. Why should not the railroads, banks, factories, mines and all other industrial resources be conscripted to save our people from depression, more destructive to the welfare of the people than all wars, famines and pestilences combined.

The farmers and workers in the cities produce these enormous profits. Why should they not be used for the comfort and enjoyment of their families, instead of being left in the hands of an idle, privileged few to be used in extravagance, wastefulness and debauchery.

Labor Weapon Affective

More than three-fourths of 1,100,000 workers involved in strikes and lock-outs in 1935 won either complete victories or "partial gains," the Department of Labor reported this week.